

P. Stern, Laurence

P. Schorr, Daniel

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Schorr Relieved of Reporting Duties

By Laurence Stern

Washington Post Staff Writer
CBS News relieved correspondent Daniel Schorr of reporting duties yesterday as the result of his acknowledged role in the sale of the House Intelligence Committee report to the New York weekly, The Village Voice. The Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press was the beneficiary of the sale.

"In view of the adversary situation in which Daniel Schorr is placed in pending government investigations, he has agreed with CBS News that he will be relieved of all reporting duties for an indefinite period," CBS News president Richard S. Salant announced yesterday.

Speaking for himself, Schorr said that the overriding issue in his case beyond the specific details of my action is the public's continued right to know in the face of a secrecy backlash.

"Experience," he said, has quickly taught that it is not possible to work as a reporter while personally involved in a controversy over reporters' rights, and I accept that reality." Schorr also asserted in his statement, which was distributed by CBS.

In its last two editions, the Voice published substantial excerpts from the House report which the House voted to keep secret until the White House had reviewed it and all information considered damaging to national security was removed.

Schorr had previously acknowledged that he had arranged for the transmission of a copy of the House report to Voice publisher Clay Felker and that, in return, a "substantial" payment



RICHARD S. SALANT

... speaks for network.

would be made to the reporters committee.

The committee, a Washington-based legal defense fund for reporters, met for 16 hours over the weekend and convened again last night in an effort to reach agreement on a statement defining its relationship to the Schorr episode.

As an organization it has had little to say about the controversy, which has swirled about it for the past two weeks. Schorr made clear that he would take no profit from the arrangement with Felker.

At present there has been no allegation of a specific criminal violation in the transmission of the report from the House committee through Schorr to The Village Voice. Nonetheless Schorr has retained lawyer Joseph A. Califano to represent him.

The House Ethics Committee has undertaken an investigation of the circumstances of the leak of the report but has made no decision about calling Schorr.

The Justice Department is conducting a preliminary investigation of the excerpts printed in The Village Voice to determine whether any secrecy laws have been violated.

There are statutes governing espionage, atomic secrets or signal intelligence that could invoke criminal prosecution—but there is no evidence as yet of any such violations.

Much of the material in the Voice excerpts had already been printed in one form or another. But the extract provided by Schorr was the largest single leak of the text to date. At the time he passed the material on to the weekly, Schorr believed that he had possession of the only copy outside of the House, according to reliable informants.

The publication of the House report in the trendy, left-liberal newspaper accelerated what Schorr called the "secrecy backlash," arousing demands on Capitol Hill that he be required to divulge his source and that he be cited for contempt.

Sources close to the CBS newsmen indicated that he intends to stand on his constitutional rights not to reveal his source, should it be demanded of him.

CBS, in its statement, said the network news organization "will support Mr. Schorr by providing legal counsel in so far as investigations relating to his CBS news activities are concerned."

The statement went on to note that Schorr acted "as an individual" in arranging

for its publication in the Voice.

"In order, however, not to prejudice the important principle involved in the acquisition, and reporting on, the report we shall postpone further CBS News action relating to Mr. Schorr until all government proceedings have been resolved," said CBS.

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P-Salant, Richard

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